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S E C R E T KABUL 003013

STATE FOR SCA/FO AND SCA/A  
NSC FOR WOOD  
OSD FOR MCGRAW  
CENTCOM FOR CG CJTF-101 POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/18/2018  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [AF](#)  
SUBJECT: KARZAI BUOYANT AFTER INTER-FAITH DIALOGUE SESSION;  
LITTLE MOVEMENT ON RECONCILIATION

Classified By: DCM Christopher Dell, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

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Summary  
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¶1. (S) Although light in substance, Karzai was pleased with his 11/13 trilateral meeting with King Abdullah and President Zardari, on the margins of the Saudi-sponsored Interfaith Dialogue at UNGA. Karzai welcomed King Abdullah's concern about the situations in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and his suggestion that Karzai and Zardari work together on Afghanistan. As a follow up, Zardari will visit Kabul in the near future. Deputy NSA Spenzada reports little new on the reconciliation front, but pledged continued close coordination with the United States in coming months, including on a proposed future initiative to Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

¶2. (SBU) Deputy NSA Ibrahim Spenzada briefed Polcouns on 11/17 on a number of issues. Below covers discussion on the Interfaith Dialogue session and reconciliation. Septel covers discussion on security in Helmand and the role of PRTs, generally.

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New York: Saudis continued concern on Afghanistan and Pakistan  
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¶3. (C) Spenzada said Karzai was extremely pleased with his participation in the 11/13, Saudi-sponsored Interfaith Dialogue at UNGA. The highlight was the trilateral between King Abdullah, Pakistan President Zardari and Karzai. King Abdullah expressed concern about the internal situations in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, but put particular emphasis on Afghanistan. He called on Zardari and Karzai to work together on Afghanistan. Abdullah told the two he supports Karzai, which delighted Karzai.

¶4. (C) Spenzada attributes the Saudis' increased concern over the regional circumstances to a number of factors: (1) economic and security deterioration in Pakistan, a longtime ally of Saudi Arabia, reflected poorly on the Kingdom; (2) Afghanistan's problems contributed to Pakistan's instability; and (3) Afghanistan's and Pakistan's problems strengthen Iran's regional position, which ultimately comes at the expense of Saudi interests.

¶5. (C) Spenzada confirmed there were no decisions from the trilateral meeting. One concrete outcome would be an upcoming visit by Zardari to Kabul. No date has been set, but Spenzada believed it would be in the near future. He confirmed Karzai and Zardari still planned to meet in early December in Turkey for the next Afghanistan-Pakistan-Turkey trilateral session.

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Reconciliation: Little new, continued close information exchange  
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¶6. (S) Reconciliation was not a topic in New York. Spenzada said there was little new activity. Rumors and press reports of follow on meetings in Saudi on the margins of the Hajj were untrue. The Afghan government was awaiting next steps between the Saudis and Taliban interests.

¶7. (S) Ibrahim said the Palace is developing a plan to try again to contact Gulbaddin Hekmatyr, to explore a possible reconciliation agreement. Ibrahim is still developing a plan and will need to discuss in greater detail with Karzai. He pledged to consult closely with the United States before undertaking.

¶8. (S) Polcouns reiterated the United States, position that any reconciliation initiative would be Afghan-led, despite certain press reports that could give a contrary impression. Ibrahim pledged to keep the United States apprised of any new developments over the coming months. He urged the United States not to overevaluate Karzai,s public comments on reconciliation with Mullah Omar. The Palace is conducting a public campaign to put the fault on the Taliban if/when reconciliation collapses. Karzai wants to be on the side of peace-making.

WOOD